



SRMUN CHARLOTTE 2019

Redefining the Role of International Organizations in the New Global Era

March 28-30, 2019

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Delegates,

Welcome to SRMUN Charlotte 2019 and the Organization of American States (OAS). My name is Helen Smith, and I have the pleasure of serving as your Director. This will be my second time as a SRMUN Charlotte staff member. Previously, I served as an Assistant Director for the African Development Bank at SRMUN Charlotte 2018. I will be graduating from Kennesaw State University with a B.S. in Political Science, a minor in International Affairs, and a certificate in Alternative Dispute Resolution. Serving as the Assistant Director for OAS will be Susan French. This is Susan's fourth year on staff, previously serving as an Assistant Director for the General Assembly Plenary at SRMUN Charlotte 2015, General Assembly Fourth Committee at SRMUN Charlotte 2016, and for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Executive Board at SRMUN Charlotte 2017. Susan has a B.S. in Homeland Security and Master's in Social Work (MSW).

The OAS is a unique body within the international system. Originally founded as an intergovernmental organization (IGO), the OAS later began work with the United Nations as an independent body. The OAS is constituted of 35 Member States who have ratified the Charter, as well as 69 Member States and the European Union who have been granted permanent observer status. The OAS works on issues that are most relevant to its Member States in the Americas and focuses on a hemispheric perspective to these issues. Through missions related to peace and security in the Americas, the OAS supports many projects and formulates summits of great political importance to its Member States.

By focusing on the mission of the OAS and the SRMUN Charlotte 2019 theme, "*Redefining the Role of International Organizations in the New Global Era*," we have developed the following topics for delegates to discuss at the conference:

- I. Promoting Sustainable Cities and Communities
- II. Eliminating Corruption in Political Institutions

This background guide provides an introduction to the committee and the topics that will be debated at SRMUN Charlotte 2019. It should be utilized as a foundation for a delegate's independent research. However, while we have attempted to provide a holistic analysis of the issues, the background guide should not be used as the single mode of analysis for the topics. Delegates are expected to go beyond the background guide and engage in intellectual inquiry of their own. The position papers for the committee should reflect the complexity of these issues and their externalities. Delegations are expected to submit a position paper and be prepared for a vigorous discussion at the conference. Position papers should be no longer than two pages in length (single spaced) and demonstrate your Member State's position, policies, and recommendations on each of the two topics. For more detailed information about position papers, delegates can visit srmun.org. **All position papers MUST be submitted no later than Friday, March 8, 2019, by 11:59pm EST via the SRMUN website.**

Susan and I are very excited to be serving as your dais for the OAS. We wish you all the best of luck in your conference preparation and look forward to working with you in the near future. Please feel free to contact Director-General Zachary Grieger, Susan, or myself if you have any questions while preparing for the conference.

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History of the Organization of American States

At the 1826 Congress of Panama, politician Simón Bolívar made a proposal that led to a union of Latin American republics.¹ The first Member States that comprised the union were representatives of Gran Colombia, Peru, the United Provinces of Central America, and Mexico.² The first official title for the union was the “Treaty of Union, League, and Perpetual Confederation,” however, the union did not last, ending in the 19th century due to the break out of civil war in Gran Colombia, which led to the break up into today’s Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, and Venezuela.³

The First International Conference of American States was held in Washington, D.C. from 1889 to 1890.⁴ At the conclusion of the conference, 18 Member States became part of a union known as the International Union of American Republics.⁵ This union later developed a permanent secretariat called the Commercial Bureau of the American Republics, later known as the International Commercial Bureau.⁶ The establishment of these two bodies is the foundation for the OAS.⁷ In 1948, at the Ninth International Conference of American States held in Bogotá, Colombia, the organization underwent its final name change, becoming the OAS.

The purpose of the OAS is “to achieve an order of peace and justice, to promote their solidarity, to strengthen their collaboration, and to defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity, and their independence.”⁸ On 30 April 1948, 21 Member States adopted the OAS Charter at the Ninth International Conference of American States, meeting in Bogotá, as well as the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, the world’s first general human rights instrument.⁹ The 1948 Charter has been modified, via Protocols of Amendment, on four occasions: Buenos Aires, 1967; Cartagena de Indias, 1985; Washington, 1992, and Managua, 1993.¹⁰ Additionally, there have been many Summits of the Heads of State and of Government of the Americas not officially provided for in the Charter that have issued decisions and recommendations, typically seen in the form of a Declaration or Plan of Action, regarding the goals to be met by the OAS and its Charter.¹¹

Article 1 of the OAS Charter states that: “Within the United Nations, the Organization of American States is a regional agency.”¹² This relationship shared between OAS and the UN is referred many times in UN documents, such as Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, several resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council.¹³ In 1995, soon after the OAS established itself as a regional agency to the UN, the two bodies adopted a Cooperation Agreement.¹⁴ This agreement made commitments for the two to work together regarding issues where both have

¹ *History*. U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States. <https://usoas.usmission.gov/our-relationship/about-oas/history/> Accessed December 23, 2018.

² *History*. U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States.

³ *History*. U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States. .

⁴ *Establishment and members, 2004*. The Organization of American States. 2004. p. 1 <http://www.itcilo.it/englis/actrav/telearn/global/ilo/law/oasint.htm> Accessed December 23, 2018.

⁵ *Organization of American States (OAS)*. Open Yearbook, UNION OF INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, <https://uia.org/s/or/en/1100049991> Accessed December 23, 2018.

⁶ *Organization of American States (OAS)*. Open Yearbook, UNION OF INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS.

⁷ *Organization of American States (OAS)*. Open Yearbook, UNION OF INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS.

⁸ *What We Do*. Organization of American States. http://www.oas.org/en/about/what_we_do.asp Accessed December 23, 2018.

⁹ *What We Do*. Organization of American States.

¹⁰ *History*. U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States

¹¹ *History*. U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States

¹² CHARTER OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (A-41) http://www.oas.org/en/sla/dil/inter_american_treaties_A-41_charter_OAS.asp#Chapter_I Accessed December 23, 2018.

¹³ United Nations Profile. Organization of American States. http://www.oas.org/en/ser/dia/institutional_relations/Documents/Profiles/United_Nations.pdf Accessed December 23, 2018.

¹⁴ United Nations Profile. Organization of American States.

stake such as human rights, fundamental freedoms, security and peace, and economic, social, and cultural development.¹⁵

The OAS has contributed to many UN projects since the Cooperation Agreement. For example, in 2013, OAS Secretary-General José Miguel Insulza met with the president of the 46th Session of the General Assembly of the UN, Vuk Jeremic, in order to discuss the role of international agencies, such as the OAS, in promoting sustainable development.¹⁶ In 2011, the OAS worked with the UN Department of Political Affairs' Mediation Support Unit (MSU) to develop a plan in which the OAS ability to provide mediation support to our Member States was expanded, and provided training sessions in mediation for OAS and its Member States officials.¹⁷ During the same year, the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression, the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), and OAS, among others, created a declaration with guidelines protecting freedom of expression on the Internet.¹⁸ In 2011 and 2012, the OAS and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) worked to integrate management of water resources, and OAS and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) created plans in 2013 to promote the Voluntary Guidelines of Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Forestry and Fisheries within the civil society networks within the OAS.¹⁹ During 2012, OAS, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) formed the Tripartite Cooperation Committee, as partners in the Pathways to Prosperity in the Americas Initiative, and cooperated with their respective institutions for communication and specifically to provide support to the governments of the Caribbean in regards to their national energy policy.²⁰ Similarly, in the Caribbean and Latin America, OAS and the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) have organized a number of capacity building activities for government officials and representatives on investment rules.²¹ Finally, the OAS works with the UN Electoral Assistance Division to observe electoral matters and provide electoral assistance.²²

There have been instances when, the OAS suspended Member States for violent actions.²³ In 1962, at the behest of the United States of America, the OAS suspended Cuba, stating that its self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist government was “incompatible with the principles and objectives of the inter-American system.”²⁴ Cuba was the only voting Member State of the OAS to vote against this motion.²⁵ On 5 July 2009, the Special General Assembly of the OAS decided to suspend Honduras following their coup d'état that overthrew their democratic government. The purpose for Honduras's suspension was “to reinforce all diplomatic initiatives and to promote other initiatives for the restoration of democracy and the rule of law in the Republic of Honduras and the reinstatement of President José Manuel Zelaya Rosales.”²⁶ In 2016, the OAS issued a report detailing the potential censure of Venezuela, and, in March 2017, the OAS called on the government to hold elections or face suspension.²⁷ Following this, in 2017, Venezuela announced its formal withdrawal from the OAS in response to what they believe is OAS interference in their election, regarded as a violation of sovereignty; this made Venezuela the first Member State to leave the regional organization voluntarily.²⁸ The past suspensions of both Cuba and Honduras have been lifted and both Member States are full participating members once again.²⁹ However, this process will take until 2019, and Venezuela remains a participating member of the OAS.³⁰

¹⁵ United Nations Profile. Organization of American States.

¹⁶ United Nations Profile. Organization of American States.

¹⁷ United Nations Profile. Organization of American States.

¹⁸ United Nations Profile. Organization of American States.

¹⁹ United Nations Profile. Organization of American States.

²⁰ United Nations Profile. Organization of American States.

²¹ United Nations Profile. Organization of American States.

²² United Nations Profile. Organization of American States.

²³ Brianna Lee, Danielle Renwick. The Organization of American States. Council on Foreign Relations. April 11, 2018. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/organization-american-states> Accessed December 23, 2018.

²⁴ Brianna Lee, Danielle Renwick. The Organization of American States. Council on Foreign Relations.

²⁵ Brianna Lee, Danielle Renwick. The Organization of American States. Council on Foreign Relations.

²⁶ Press Release. OAS SUSPENDS MEMBERSHIP OF HONDURAS. Organization of American States. July 5, 2009 http://www.oas.org/en/media_center/press_release.asp?sCodigo=E-219/09 Accessed December 23, 2018.

²⁷ Press Release. OAS SUSPENDS MEMBERSHIP OF HONDURAS. Organization of American States.

²⁸ Press Release. OAS SUSPENDS MEMBERSHIP OF HONDURAS. Organization of American States.

²⁹ ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS). Nuclear Threat Initiative.

<https://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/organization-american-states-oas/>

³⁰ Venezuela Scores Victory as US Fails to Secure Votes for OAS Suspension. TeleSurvvtv. June 2018

I. Promoting Sustainable Cities and Communities

Introduction

The Organization of American States (OAS) believes it is imperative to build sustainable cities and communities, and this was echoed at the First Summit on Sustainable Development in December 1996.³¹ At the summit, held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, a Plan of Action was created, and it has since been a guide for the Department of Sustainable Development of the OAS (OAS-DSD).³² Many of the OAS' sustainable cities and communities projects are funded through small-grant funding, but despite the donation sizes, the OAS is motivated for “innovative” community-level sustainable development projects either across regions or specific Member States.³³ As OAS Secretary-General José Miguel Insulza said, “The cities of the Americas are experiencing dramatic and accelerating changes” and the most urbanized hemisphere with cities housing 70 percent of the population are in OAS Member States.³⁴ Furthermore, Secretary-General Insulza said that “our objective is to foster resilient, more sustainable cities – reducing, for example, consumption of water and energy – while simultaneously improving the quality of life and the participation of the community.”³⁵ While there are financial and logistical hurdles in meeting sustainable cities and communities, proven leaders in urban infrastructure projects from Bolivia, Honduras, and Nicaragua and sustainable transport programs from Brazil, Mexico, the United States of America, Colombia, and Guatemala, and in reducing carbon footprints from Barbados, Belize, and Trinidad and Tobago have solidified the OAS’s obligation to environmental and sustainable mandates.

History

During the First Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, in December 1996, the third main Initiative for Action was sustainable cities and communities.³⁶ The summit recognized that the primary challenges to the attainment of sustainable development in this area included incorporation of the least developed and most disadvantaged sectors of the population into the productive process, narrowing of the housing unit gap, and basic infrastructure services expansion through a comprehensive approach to the problem of rapid urban growth, promotion of the quality of life in cities and communities, and assurance of the most efficient and least polluting industrial and transportation practices so as to reduce adverse environmental impact.³⁷ The Member States present at this conference developed 15 overarching initiatives that formed a plan of action for the future.³⁸ The most impactful initiatives, under the main initiative for sustainable cities and communities, formed two main areas of action for the future: assisting the urban poor and succeeding in environmentally friendly urban development and cleanup.³⁹ Sub-Initiatives 36, 38, and 44 focused on efforts to meet the housing needs of the poorest and most vulnerable sectors, and see that the poor and most vulnerable are affected as little as possible by environmental degradation and can share in the benefits of environmental protection.⁴⁰ Sub-Initiatives 37, 39, 41,

<https://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/Venezuela-Celebrates-Pences-Defeat-in-OAS-20180606-0005.html> Accessed December 23, 2018.

³¹ "Sustainable Communities in Central America and the Caribbean," The Organization of American States, www.oas.org/en/sedi/dsd/biodiversity/sustainable_cities/sustainablecommunities.asp Accessed December 23, 2018.

³² Sustainable Communities in Central America and the Caribbean. The Organization of American States.

³³ "OAS Sustainable Cities Initiative," Green Growth Knowledge Platform, www.greengrowthknowledge.org/project/oas-sustainable-cities-initiative Accessed December 23, 2018.

³⁴ OAS Announces Recipients of “Sustainable Communities in Central America and the Caribbean” Project Grant Winners. Organization of American States. December 11, 2012 http://www.oas.org/en/media_center/press_release.asp?sCodigo=E-460/12

³⁵ OAS Announces Recipients of “Sustainable Communities in Central America and the Caribbean” Project Grant Winners. Organization of American States.

³⁶ Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of the Americas. Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development. December 7-8, 1996 <http://www.summit-americas.org/boliviaplan.htm> Accessed December 23, 2018.

³⁷ Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of the Americas. Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development.

³⁸ Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of the Americas. Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development.

³⁹ Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of the Americas. Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development.

⁴⁰ Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of the Americas. Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development.

45 promote the exchange of information in both international, technical, and financial cooperation, develop environmentally sound technologies, and provide inclusion of sustainable development in urban development plans.⁴¹

Furthermore, at the April 2009 Summit of the Americas in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, leaders of the Western Hemisphere reaffirmed their commitment to work together towards a clean energy future.⁴² Their mission was “to promote regional energy cooperation through different strategies and actions for achieving a cleaner, safer, efficient, modern and fair energy deployment.”⁴³ From this summit came the inception of the Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA).⁴⁴ The focuses of discussions and primary goal of any established projects of the ECPA are energy efficiency, renewable energy, cleaner and more efficient use of fossil fuels, energy infrastructure, energy poverty, regional energy integration, and energy research and innovation.⁴⁵ In the first year of the ECPA’s action, nearly a dozen initiatives and projects began under ECPA led by the United States of America (USA), Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico, Peru, and Trinidad and Tobago.⁴⁶ In April 2010, as part of ECPA, the USA invited Western Hemisphere energy ministers to the Energy and Climate Ministerial of the Americas to highlight progress, announce new partnerships, and facilitate the development of new initiatives.⁴⁷ Today, the OAS’ Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI) of the OAS-DSD operates the ECPA Technical Coordination Unit, established for the purpose of coordinating the Partnership’s activities and outreach.⁴⁸

In 2015, the United Nations (UN) adopted A/RES/70/1, or commonly referred to as the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).⁴⁹ The SDGs were adopted to help develop a better world for the future. The SDGs contained 17 goals and 169 targets that would benefit Member States and cover topics that range from reducing poverty to sustainable economies.⁵⁰ This 15-year programme would help create a global partnership between Member States, the UN, and other institutions.⁵¹ Specifically, SDG 11 is to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.”⁵² Urbanization, housing infrastructure, environmental impacts, and natural disaster vulnerability have been the main focuses of Goal 11.⁵³ In 2018, the progress of Goal 11 in 2018 was noted as: the actual number of people living in slums increased from 807 million to 883 million; about three quarters of municipal solid waste generated is collected, leaving more people and waste provided for or regulated.⁵⁴ Furthermore, in 2016, 91 percent of the urban population worldwide were breathing air that did not meet the World Health Organization’s (WHO) air quality guidelines, and an estimated 4.2 million people died as a result of air pollution.⁵⁵ Finally, from 1990 to 2013, almost 90 percent of deaths attributed to internationally reported disasters occurred in low- and middle-income Member States.⁵⁶ These statistics prove that those living in urban areas face issues unseen in other areas, and creating sustainable cities and communities is a prevalent issue.

⁴¹ Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of the Americas. Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development.

⁴² About ECPA. Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas.
<http://www.ecpamericas.org/About-ECPA.aspx> Accessed December 23, 2018.

⁴³ About ECPA. Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas.

⁴⁴ About ECPA. Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas.

⁴⁵ About ECPA. Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas.

⁴⁶ About ECPA. Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas.

⁴⁷ About ECPA. Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas.

⁴⁸ Welcome to ECPA. Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas.
<http://www.ecpamericas.org> Accessed December 23, 2018.

⁴⁹ "United Nations Official Document. A/70/L.1" United Nations. Accessed December 23, 2017.
http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A%2FRES%2F70%2F1&Lang=E Accessed December 23, 2018.

⁵⁰ "United Nations Official Document. A/70/L.1" United Nations.

⁵¹ "United Nations Official Document. A/70/L.1" United Nations.

⁵² PROGRESS OF GOAL 11 IN 2018. Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform.
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg11> Accessed December 23, 2018.

⁵³ PROGRESS OF GOAL 11 IN 2018. Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform.

⁵⁴ PROGRESS OF GOAL 11 IN 2018. Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform.

⁵⁵ PROGRESS OF GOAL 11 IN 2018. Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform.

⁵⁶ PROGRESS OF GOAL 11 IN 2018. Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform.

Current Situation

The growth of urban areas and the subsequent increase in urban population are quickly becoming the most relevant issue regarding sustainability.⁵⁷ Half of the world's population, or 3.5 billion people, live in cities.⁵⁸ By 2050, the urban population is expected to reach 6.5 billion, nearly doubling its current size, and approximately 70 out of 100 people in the world will live in cities.⁵⁹ ⁶⁰ This issue is especially pertinent to the OAS, as before 2050, 95 percent of urban expansion will take place in the developing world, with much of that 95 percent occurring in developing South American Member States.⁶¹

The prevalence of slums in growing urban areas is a serious issue for many OAS Member States. A slum can be characterized by unsafe, unhealthy, or overcrowded homes, limited or no access to safe water, plumbing, electricity, or transportation, and no secure land tenure.⁶² Nearly one billion urban poor still live in slums and are often excluded from access to affordable housing, good-quality basic services, and better jobs.⁶³ Furthermore, between 2000-2014, the actual number of people living in slums increased globally from 807 million to 883 million.⁶⁴ Those who live in slums often suffer disproportionately from environmental health impacts, lack of access to basic health care, and educational services.⁶⁵ Additionally, due to a lack of clean water, or access to it, those living in slums often pay ten times more for drinking water when compared with middle-income households, which stalls development and creates a negative feedback loop of poverty.⁶⁶ Not only does this hinder sustainability and development in communities, but beyond the lack of basic infrastructure, most city statistics don't reach out into slum areas, making it even more difficult to understand the links between slums and sustainable cities and communities.⁶⁷

The importance of infrastructure for future stability of cities cannot be understated as approximately 75 percent of the infrastructure that will be utilized in 2050 does not currently exist.⁶⁸ Integration of sustainable and resilient infrastructure projects with existing infrastructure would benefit public sector institutions as well as reduce climate risks and emissions; building resilient infrastructure to withstand changing conditions and natural disasters, and using waste recycling facilities to decrease waste and pollution open up areas for private sector investment and benefits the environment.⁶⁹ To address the desperate need of infrastructure support, the OAS has been working with Member States in four areas for sustainable cities: economic development, housing, pollution prevention and environmental protection, and sustainable transport.⁷⁰ These programs are implemented in areas of need within OAS Member States, and target specific local issues.

Along with the ECPA and Sustainable Cities, the OAS-DSD maintains the Sustainable Communities in Central America and the Caribbean program.⁷¹ With all Member States in Central America and the Caribbean participating

⁵⁷ PROGRESS OF GOAL 11 IN 2018. Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform.

⁵⁸ PROGRESS OF GOAL 11 IN 2018. Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform.

⁵⁹ PROGRESS OF GOAL 11 IN 2018. Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform.

⁶⁰ 3 Big Ideas to Achieve Sustainable Cities and Communities. The World Bank. January 31 2018.

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/immersive-story/2018/01/31/3-big-ideas-to-achieve-sustainable-cities-and-communities> Accessed December 23, 2018.

⁶¹ GOAL 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES. United Nations Development Programme.

<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-11-sustainable-cities-and-communities.html> Accessed December 23, 2018.

⁶² What is a Slum. Habitat for Humanity.

<https://www.habitatforhumanity.org.uk/what-we-do/slum-rehabilitation/what-is-a-slum/> Accessed December 23, 2018.

⁶³ 3 Big Ideas to Achieve Sustainable Cities and Communities. The World Bank.

⁶⁴ PROGRESS OF GOAL 11 IN 2018. Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform.

⁶⁵ Meeting of Ministers of Health and Environment of the Americas. Mar de Plata, Argentina. June 16-17 2005.

<https://www.oas.org/dsd/Documents/CompendiumofDocuments.pdf> Accessed December 23, 2018.

⁶⁶ Meeting of Ministers of Health and Environment of the Americas. Mar de Plata, Argentina.

⁶⁷ Meeting of Ministers of Health and Environment of the Americas. Mar de Plata, Argentina.

⁶⁸ Sustainable Infrastructure and Finance | UN Environment. Accessed December 23, 2017.

<http://drustage.unep.org/sustainable-infrastructure-and-finance> Accessed December 23, 2018.

⁶⁹ Sustainable Infrastructure and Finance | UN Environment.

⁷⁰ Sustainable Communities in Central America and the Caribbean. Organization of American States.

http://www.oas.org/en/sedi/dsd/biodiversity/sustainable_cities/sustainablecommunities.asp Accessed December 23, 2018.

⁷¹ Sustainable Communities in Central America and the Caribbean. Organization of American States.

in this program, as well as funding from the USA's Department of State, it has established various successful programs such as Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network, four phases of ReefFix, and the Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative.⁷² In addition to Sustainable Communities in Central America and the Caribbean, the Sustainable Cities, Biodiversity and Sustainable Land Management division of the OAS offers Sustainable Cities Courses Supported by the USA's Permanent Mission to the OAS.⁷³

The Effect of Natural Disasters and Climate Change on Sustainable Cities

The USA's National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Goddard Institute for Space Studies found that the global surface temperature in the past decade is 0.8 °C higher than it was in the beginning of the 20th Century.⁷⁴ The risks of rising temperatures include natural disasters such as droughts, storms, tropical cyclones, and monsoons.⁷⁵ These events affect some Member States, as they do not have the resources to protect communities and infrastructure in relation to natural disasters.⁷⁶ All types of infrastructure, including energy, transportation, and waters systems, lose their efficiency and reliability due to climate change related disasters.⁷⁷ To combat this, a focus on sustainable cities and infrastructure must be promoted by governments in order to continue a system of adaptation in the face of disasters.⁷⁸ Infrastructure is the foundation of the global economy as it improves living conditions and impacts the environment.⁷⁹ This effect will be unequally felt; with over 90 percent of all urban centers located in coastal areas, cities are facing increasing risks from devastating hurricanes, floods, and other natural hazards that are becoming more severe due to climate change.⁸⁰ Along with massive urban population growth, natural disasters will not only incur the costs of loss of infrastructure but by 2030 climate change and natural disasters may also cost cities worldwide USD 314 billion each year, and push 77 million more urban residents into poverty.⁸¹

Financing Solutions

Natural disasters produce both direct costs to governments and indirect cost to individuals, damage to a Member State's infrastructure, and harm economic output.⁸² In 2015, for the first time in global history, the number of natural disasters surpassed the 1,000-event threshold and cost Member States over USD 90 billion, with only 30 percent of this cost insured.⁸³ However, Member States can invest in disaster risk insurance for their most at risk areas to protect their future and invest in sustainability.⁸⁴ Disaster risk insurance covers hazards arising from geological, meteorological, hydrological, climatological, oceanic, biological, and technological/man-made events, or a combination of them. These can include earthquakes, floods, storms, droughts, air/water/soil pollution, nuclear radiation, toxic waste, dam failures, transport accidents, factory explosions, fires, and chemical spills among others.⁸⁵ Disaster risk insurance pays a certain amount from an insurer to an area hit by a disaster. This works the same way most insurance does, with an individual or entity paying a certain amount in timeframes, also called a

⁷² Sustainable Communities in Central America and the Caribbean. Organization of American States.

⁷³ Sustainable Cities, Biodiversity and Sustainable Land Management. Organization of American States.

http://www.oas.org/en/sedi/dsd/biodiversity/sustainable_cities/courses.asp Accessed December 23, 2018.

⁷⁴ "Climate change and the city: Building capacity for urban adaptation." Progress in Planning. July 10, 2014. Accessed December 23, 2018. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0305900614000397>

⁷⁵ "The Rising Cost of Natural Hazards : Feature Articles." NASA. Accessed December 23, 2018.

https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Features/RisingCost/rising_cost5.php

⁷⁶ "United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform." United Nations. Accessed December 23, 2018.

⁷⁷ "The Rising Cost of Natural Hazards : Feature Articles." NASA

⁷⁸ Antonio Estache, Grégoire Garsous. The impact of infrastructure on growth in developing countries.

⁷⁹ Antonio Estache, Grégoire Garsous. The impact of infrastructure on growth in developing countries. April 2012

<http://www.undp.org/content/sdfinance/en/home/solutions/disaster-risk-insurance.html> Accessed December 23, 2018.

⁸⁰ Antonio Estache, Grégoire Garsous. The impact of infrastructure on growth in developing countries

⁸¹ 3 Big Ideas to Achieve Sustainable Cities and Communities. The World Bank.

⁸² Disaster Risk Insurance. United Nations Development Programme.

<http://www.undp.org/content/sdfinance/en/home/solutions/disaster-risk-insurance.html> Accessed December 23, 2018

⁸³ Disaster Risk Insurance. United Nations Development Programme.

⁸⁴ Disaster Risk Insurance. United Nations Development Programme.

⁸⁵ Disaster Risk Insurance. United Nations Development Programme.

premium, into a fund in which the payout would come from in case of a natural disaster. An insurance payout in this case assists in rebuilding infrastructure, but also helps to cushion economic shock, so that business remains relatively stable.⁸⁶ Additionally, not only property and assets can be insured; it is possible for Member States to insure natural forests, coral reefs, mangroves, and other naturally occurring resources and terrain.⁸⁷

As an alternative or a subsidiary of disaster risk insurance, Member States and their cities can also utilize national environmental trust funds (ETFs), which have been established globally in more than 50 developing Member States.⁸⁸ ETFs are very versatile and vary in their purpose, legal and political context, human resource capacity, and donor requirements.⁸⁹ More often than not, it is formed by a grant-making institution, such as a foundation, NGO, community-based organization, or government agency; for example, the National Science Foundation Smart & Connected Communities (S&CC) program in the USA.⁹⁰ Once a grant making institution is found, that institution manages financial resources for environmental projects, such as biodiversity conservation, protection of wildlife, forests, climate adaptation and mitigation.⁹¹ ETFs offer more solutions than typical funding as they use additional monetary funds and resources from specific donors, national governments, the private sector, and occasionally private citizens.⁹² If well utilized, ETFs can improve the efficiency as well as the size of environmental and climate projects.

Green bonds are another option for cities to achieve maximum sustainability. Green bonds are initially backed by the primary issuer and their assets, and are provided through large scale banks, with most coming from the World Bank.⁹³ Issuing green bonds allows cities to monetarily achieve the implementation of sustainable development projects with extra monetary assistance from the green bond market.⁹⁴ Under a green bond framework, the proceeds from green bonds are set aside for eligible green projects only.⁹⁵ In addition to the benefits created by the green projects that are financed through green bonds, the green bonds can also assist in limiting a city's financial risks by diversifying sources of funding.⁹⁶ Instead of relying completely on tax money, cities can tap into additional sources of money, and access more affordable investments and investors that may not be available in typical markets and are needed before undertaking massive green energy projects.⁹⁷ Green bonds have been used within OAS Member States, namely, the first green bond issued by Mexico City in December 2016 had a value of USD 51 million.⁹⁸ As per the precedents set by Mexico City's green bond program usage, the money gained through the bond will be used to support projects in "sustainable transport, sustainable buildings, renewable energy, energy efficiency, water efficiency and wastewater management, pollution prevention and control, conservation of biodiversity and climate change adaptation."⁹⁹ Outside of the OAS, since Gothenburg, Sweden enacted their green bonds in 2013, they have raised a total of USD 486 million through the green bond market.¹⁰⁰ With the money Gothenburg gained through the green bond market, they invested in sustainable city projects such as large-scale production of biogas, provision of zero emission electric cars for those who work in infrastructure and city management, and created efficient water treatment using the largest ultrafilter ever built in Scandinavia.¹⁰¹

⁸⁶ Disaster Risk Insurance. United Nations Development Programme.

⁸⁷ Disaster Risk Insurance. United Nations Development Programme.

⁸⁸ Environmental Trust Funds. United Nations Development Programme.
<http://www.undp.org/content/sdfinance/en/home/solutions/environmental-trust-funds.html> Accessed December 23, 2018

⁸⁹ Environmental Trust Funds. United Nations Development Programme

⁹⁰ Smart and Connected Communities (S&CC). National Science Foundation.

https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2018/nsf18520/nsf18520.htm#pgm_desc_txt Accessed January 5, 2019.

⁹¹ Environmental Trust Funds. United Nations Development Programme

⁹² Environmental Trust Funds. United Nations Development Programme

⁹³ Green Bond. Investopedia. <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/g/green-bond.asp>

⁹⁴ John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals. United 4 Sustainable Smart Cities. https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/U4SSC_Deliverable-Connecting-Cities-and-Communities.pdf Accessed January 5, 2019.

⁹⁵ John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals.

⁹⁶ John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals.

⁹⁷ John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals.

⁹⁸ John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals.

⁹⁹ John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals.

¹⁰⁰ John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals

¹⁰¹ Gothenburg Green Bonds | Sweden. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. 2013.

Case Study: Uruguay

A unique Member State of the OAS, Uruguay claims to have 95 percent of their electricity provided by clean energy sources and a total clean energy capacity of 34 percent including biomass, solar and wind plants.¹⁰² Uruguay addresses SDG 11 from three main focuses: social inclusion and well-being, sustainability and climate change, and urban governance.¹⁰³ To address social inclusion and well-being, Uruguay is diversifying its access programs that address the different needs and circumstances of its citizens, as well as provides transportation in almost all cities with more than 30,000 inhabitants that have existing public transport service.¹⁰⁴ For sustainability and climate change, Uruguay has developed early warning systems for the mitigation of natural disasters and the development of prevention and management tools.¹⁰⁵ In urban governance, Uruguay has been working to promote territorial management within their infrastructure, aiming to promote more participation in civil society.¹⁰⁶

Uruguay has developed many different climate change policies, strategies, and plans over the past ten years.¹⁰⁷ This Member State has committed to ambitious and specific climate mitigation goals to be achieved by 2030 along with a planning process for awareness and consensus on the importance of climate change adaptation and an updating of the 2009 National System for Response to Climate Change and Variability (SNRCC).¹⁰⁸ Recently, Uruguay has been pushing to adapt their agriculture sector to align with existing economic and sustainability goals, as well as the National Policy on Climate Change, and the Member States National Determined Contribution (NDC) commitments under the Paris Agreement.¹⁰⁹ In order to achieve this success, and fund their programs, Uruguay relies partially on international funding and assistance from the UN Development Programme and UN Environmental Programme.¹¹⁰ However, Uruguay also invests their domestic resources in their projects and adaptation efforts, and the former national director of energy stated that “renewables is just a financial business” and that it “requires investment.”¹¹¹

Case Study: Smart Dubai

Smart Dubai is a case study from United 4 Smart Sustainable Cities, a UN initiative coordinated by International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), created to promote the transition to smart sustainable cities.¹¹² The vision of Smart Dubai is “to become the happiest city in the world,” a goal intended to be achieved by technological advances.¹¹³ Integral to the Smart Dubai vision is the implementation of the Smart Dubai Platform (SDP). This platform is a modern shift from typical independent city infrastructure building, where solutions are offered in separate departments with little to no overlapping.¹¹⁴ This “smart” and sustainable transformation is intended to digitally integrate all of Dubai's information technology and services. The SDP includes services such as geolocation data support, enabling advanced responsiveness in many citywide applications, from emergency medical response to event planning and transportation logistics.¹¹⁵ For those

<https://unfccc.int/climate-action/momentum-for-change/financing-for-climate-friendly/gothenburg-green-bonds>
Accessed January 5, 2019.

¹⁰² URUGUAY. CLIMATESCOPE 2017.

<http://global-climatescope.org/en/country/uruguay/#/enabling-framework> Accessed January 5, 2019.

¹⁰³ Uruguay, Voluntary National Review 2018. Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform.

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/memberstates/uruguay> Accessed January 5, 2019.

¹⁰⁴ Uruguay, Voluntary National Review 2018. Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform

¹⁰⁵ Uruguay, Voluntary National Review 2018. Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform

¹⁰⁶ Uruguay, Voluntary National Review 2018. Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform

¹⁰⁷ Uruguay Case Study - NAP-Ag Programme. United Nations Development Programme.

<http://adaptation-undp.org/resources/case-study/uruguay-case-study-nap-ag-programme>

¹⁰⁸ Uruguay Case Study - NAP-Ag Programme. United Nations Development Programme.

¹⁰⁹ Uruguay Case Study - NAP-Ag Programme. United Nations Development Programme.

¹¹⁰ National Adaptation Plan process in focus: Lessons from Uruguay. UNDP, UNEP.

http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Climate%20and%20Disaster%20Resilience/Climate%20Change/Uruguay_NAP_country_briefing.pdf

¹¹¹ National Adaptation Plan process in focus: Lessons from Uruguay. UNDP, UNEP.

¹¹² John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals.

¹¹³ John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals.

¹¹⁴ John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals.

¹¹⁵ John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals.

employed by this method of infrastructure, personalized dashboards and analytics tools will be provided, making the system easy to use and encompassing data from other sectors.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, while all citizens benefit from their own infrastructure, in Dubai, private citizens will benefit from this system more than usual, with a single sign-on digital ID that will permit them to access hundreds of city services with one secure username and password.¹¹⁷ This digital ID will also be linked to their Emirates ID, so that city services can be completed more efficiently.¹¹⁸ The SDP will also power secure digital payments, allowing for accountability and comfort for Dubai citizens, along with a “real-time app environment” allowing for simple viewing of traffic monitoring and smart grids connected through the Internet.¹¹⁹ Furthermore, this open framework of data will provide opportunities for entrepreneurs, city planners, business owners, and potentially other Member States to learn from the Dubai Data initiative.

The SDP also has a positive environmental impact. Along with other data, the SDP is designed to collect citywide environmental data from various locations in Dubai such as air quality, noise, pollution, energy, water and land-related data.¹²⁰ Additionally, since the transition is one away from physical and into digital, SDP-related economic and social services in Dubai will decrease, or eradicate in some cases, the need for city services to be provided in person. This means less need for transportation and a subsequent decrease in the amount of Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) being emitted along with less upkeep needed for transportation services such as roads.¹²¹

Conclusion

The role of urban population growth, prevalence of slums, and climate change cannot be understated when considering building sustainable cities and communities. Both the internal factors involving people and infrastructure, and the external factors of the effects of unsustainable practices need to be considered by Member States in the future. Building on the examples set by sustainable cities and Member States will be vital, as will the support of international communities and UN structures such as the UNEP and UNDP. Additionally, financing for green projects, infrastructure building, and general adaptations should be openly considered, with many options being available for Member States. In building sustainable cities and communities, one size does not fit all. While Member State should rely on the foundation built by SDG 11, when considering their own cities and communities, they should be innovative in their ideas and lead others in the UN towards taking the same steps.

Committee Directive

Delegates should ask themselves what Member States have done so far to develop infrastructure against climate change. Do Member States have the financial resources to develop the necessary infrastructure? What can your own Member State do to decrease the presence and issues presented by slums? Should Member States rely on international assistance, or should the initial push for sustainability come from individual Member States actions as we see in Uruguay and Dubai? What could current organizations inside and outside of the Americas do to help finance this issue? What technological advances are needed to help achieve SDG 11? Delegates should also consider what financing solutions are more available to their citizens and economies; crowdfunding, carbon markets, taxes, and lotteries are all potential financing solutions that should be reviewed.

¹¹⁶ John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals.

¹¹⁷ John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals.

¹¹⁸ John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals.

¹¹⁹ John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals.

¹²⁰ John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals.

¹²¹ John Smiciklas et. al. Connecting cities and communities with the Sustainable Development Goals.

II. Eliminating Corruption in Political Institutions

Introduction

Corruption within political institutions is a global occurrence that undermines the rule of law, creates an atmosphere for human rights violations, disrupts the market, and allows organized crime institutions to flourish.¹²² In fact, corruption has been identified as “one of the most serious obstacles and threats” to democracy and development in a number of OAS Member States, according to an OAS General Secretariat report.¹²³ Thus, the OAS has made recognizing, addressing, and eliminating institutional political corruption a primary focus of its responsibility.¹²⁴

Transparency International defines corruption as “a behavior on the part of officials in the public sector, whether politicians or civil servants, in which they improperly and unlawfully enrich themselves or those close to them, by the misuse of public power entrusted to them.”¹²⁵ Further, corruption can take on many forms, including bribery, embezzlement, extortion, fraud, and nepotism.¹²⁶ Regardless of the form of corruption, when a Member State is plagued by a high level of corruption, both the citizens of the Member State and the international community are negatively impacted. As has been demonstrated by numerous studies, corruption hinders economic development and investment, as corrupt rulers funnel funds designated for investment for their personal use, and corrupt institutions do not attract the foreign investment they would otherwise receive.¹²⁷ ¹²⁸ Additionally, high levels of corruption create instability within the government and undermine the rule of law, ultimately creating a breeding ground for social and political unrest.¹²⁹

Of course, the first challenge to eliminating corruption is to locate where it is prevalent. Corruption has proven challenging to combat within institutions as it is often untraceable and hard to prove.¹³⁰ While in recent years economists have developed a number of new strategies for detecting corruption, a significant portion of the activity remains difficult or impossible to detect in a timely manner.¹³¹ Further complicating efforts to eliminate corruption in Latin America and the Caribbean, according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index, nearly all Latin American and Caribbean Member States are either developing or least developing.¹³² The lack of strong institutions in developing Member States makes it more difficult to maintain the rule of law, as well as monitor the execution of the rule of law.¹³³ When the enforceability of law is questionable and actions are likely to not be proven, corruption is a common occurrence and people throughout the OAS suffer.

¹²² “United Nations Convention Against Corruption,” October 31, 2003, the United Nations. Accessed January 1, 2019. http://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNCAC/Publications/Convention/08-50026_E.pdf

¹²³ Garcia-Gonzalez, Jorge. “The OAS and the fight against corruption in the Americas,” Accessed January 1, 2019. <http://www.oecd.org/corruption/ethics/2731127.pdf>

¹²⁴ Ahrens, Jan Martinez. “OAS chief: ‘The Americas are cutting out their corrupted parts,’” April 12, 2018, *El Pais*. Accessed January 1, 2019. https://elpais.com/elpais/2018/04/12/inenglish/1523522691_665516.html

¹²⁵ “Comparative Analysis of Anti-Corruption Laws of Ghana Compared with The United Nations Convention Against Corruption and The African Union Convention on Preventing and Combatting Corruption,” The United Nations (UN), Accessed November 21, 2018. <http://legal.un.org/avl/documents/scans/GhanaAnti-CorruptionManual.pdf?teil=II&j>

¹²⁶ “Corruption and Technology in Public Procurement,” The World Bank, April 2007. Accessed January 1, 2019. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/946171468151791174/text/481060WPOCorru10Box338882B01PUBLIC1.t>
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¹²⁷ Garcia-Gonzalez, Jorge. “The OAS and the fight against corruption in the Americas.”

¹²⁸ Lynch, Edward, “Latin American democracy is crumbling under corruption.” March 28, 2018, *The Hill*. Accessed January 1, 2019. <https://thehill.com/opinion/international/380482-latin-american-democracy-is-crumbling-under-corruption>

¹²⁹ Garcia-Gonzalez, Jorge. “The OAS and the fight against corruption in the Americas.”

¹³⁰ United Nations Convention against Corruption, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Accessed October 12, 2018. http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/tools_and_publications/UN-convention-against-corruption.html

¹³¹ Olken, Benjamin A. and Pande, Rohini, “Corruption in Developing Countries,” February 2012, MIT. Accessed January 1, 2019. <https://economics.mit.edu/files/7589>

¹³² “Human Development Index,” UNDP, 2018. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi>
Accessed January 1, 2019.

¹³³ Garcia-Gonzalez, Jorge. “The OAS and the fight against corruption in the Americas.”

UN and OAS Actions

Since the conclusion of the Cold War, the international community has taken a proactive approach when it comes to deterring corruption in political institutions. The UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) is the “only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument” and encompasses prevention, criminalization, cooperation, recovery, and transparency.¹³⁴ The UNCAC was adopted through A/RES/58/4 in 2003.¹³⁵ It identifies five main areas to address: preventive measures, criminalization and law enforcement, international cooperation, asset recovery, and technical assistance and information exchange.¹³⁶ The Conference of the States Parties (COSP) is the primary policy-making body of the UNCAC. The COSP also provides support and direction to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime in the development and enactment of the UNCAC, as well as to Member States that wish to implement the UNCAC.¹³⁷

The enactment of the UNCAC is supported by the Implementation Review Mechanism (IRM), which is a peer-review system that assists Member States.¹³⁸ Through the IRM, each Member State is assigned two peers, one of which must be within their region (and if possible similar legal framework); the peers are selected via a lottery at the beginning of each year.¹³⁹ The purpose of this review process is work towards finding new and effective manners to eliminate corruption as well as ensure that a Member State is following the UNCAC, a process completed through a self-assessment checklist and peer-State visits or meetings.¹⁴⁰ Further, the IRM process also provides information on achievements, fosters international collaboration, and identifies good practices.¹⁴¹

Additionally, the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption (IACC) was adopted by the OAS General Assembly in 1996 and has since been signed by 34 OAS Member States and ratified by 33 Member States.¹⁴² The IACC was enacted to help combat corruption by assisting Member States to put in place mechanisms that will combat, detect, investigate, punish, and eradicate corruption.¹⁴³ The enactment of the IACC is overseen by the Follow-Up Mechanism for the Implementation of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption (MESICIC), which reviews the status of a Member State in fulfilling the requirements of the IACC and presents recommendations for improvement.¹⁴⁴

The MESICIC is the Anticorruption Mechanism of the OAS and consists of two parts: The Committee of Experts and the COSP.¹⁴⁵ The COSP is the primary policy-making body of the UN Convention Against Corruption and is responsible for supporting implementation of the IACC as well as providing guidance on implementing anti-corruption activities.¹⁴⁷ The Committee of Experts is the body responsible for the technical review of the implementation of the IACC by Member States; in other words, the Committee of Experts reviews the actions of a designated group of Member States each year and provides a report on the status of their implementation of the

¹³⁴ “United Nations Convention against Corruption,” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Accessed October 12, 2018. http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/tools_and_publications/UN-convention-against-corruption.html

¹³⁵ “United Nations Convention Against Corruption,” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

¹³⁶ “United Nations Convention Against Corruption,” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

¹³⁷ “United Nations Convention Against Corruption,” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

¹³⁸ Implementation Review Mechanism, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Accessed November 21, 2018.

<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/implementation-review-mechanism.html>

¹³⁹ “United Nations Convention Against Corruption,” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

¹⁴⁰ Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the Convention against Corruption, UNODC, Accessed December 8, 2018.

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/2017/November/mechanism-for-the-review-of-implementation-of-the-convention-against-corruption.html>

¹⁴¹ Implementation Review Mechanism, UNODC, Accessed November 21, 2018.

<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/implementation-review-mechanism.html>

¹⁴² Inter-American Convention Against Corruption (B-58), OAS, Accessed November 22, 2018.

http://www.oas.org/en/sla/dil/inter_american_treaties_B-58_against_Corruption.asp

¹⁴³ Inter-American Convention Against Corruption Background, OAS Department of Legal Cooperation, Accessed November 22, 2018. http://oas.org/juridico/english/corr_bg.htm

¹⁴⁴ “How the OAS Functions,” OAS. <http://www.oas.org/en/sla/dlc/mesicic/documentos.html>. Accessed January 2, 2019.

¹⁴⁵ What is the MESICIC, OAS, Accessed December 01, 2018. <http://www.oas.org/en/sla/dlc/mesicic/>

¹⁴⁶ “How the OAS Functions,” OAS.

¹⁴⁷ “How the OAS Functions,” OAS.

IACAC.¹⁴⁸ The Committee meets two times every year in Washington, D.C. to formulate the anticorruption reports for the Member States under audit, as well as exchange best practices and discuss items of interest to the body.¹⁴⁹

Finally, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted in 2015 by all 193 UN Member States with the intention that this Resolution would serve as a plan that promotes peace and prosperity for the international community, both in the present and for the future.¹⁵⁰ The adopted agenda created 17 goals for development covering a wide variety of topics.¹⁵¹ Of note, Goal 16 focuses on promoting peace and justice through the creation of strong institutions.¹⁵² According to Goal 16, this is accomplished in a number of ways, including eliminating corruption and bribery in all forms, promoting the rule of law, ensuring equal justice, and combating organized crime.¹⁵³

Current Situation

For many OAS Member States, corruption is a deeply rooted problem going back hundreds of years. A 2018 UN report found that one in five private businesses or firms dealing with international governments revealed receiving a request for bribery upon engagement in matters of business.¹⁵⁴ Thus, while the international community has made significant strides in identifying areas for improvement with regard to corruption, it is clear that corruption remains a significant problem across the globe. While international organizations such as the UN, OAS, World Bank Group, and Organization for Cooperation and Development have enacted policies and conventions to work towards the elimination of corruption, nearly all developing States suffer from high or very high levels of corruption within their government.¹⁵⁵ It is currently estimated that when corruption levels are high, the household price of water increases by as much as 30 percent, and the general price of goods by 20 percent.¹⁵⁶

But why are OAS Member States seemingly more perceptible to corruption? A majority of Latin American Member States are considered developing in economic and political status. Given the growth of the global economy, international trade is more than ever necessary to build a state and attain economic prosperity.¹⁵⁷ The lack of existing rules and regulations within these developing states as well as the lack of strong political institutions creates a system that promotes bribery, embezzlement, and overall corruption.¹⁵⁸

Case Study: Peru

Corruption is deeply embedded within Peruvian history. Dating back to colonial days, Peru was considered little more than a precious metal supply for the Kingdom of Spain.¹⁵⁹ In 1821, upon winning independence, Peru's dreams of prosperity were quickly squashed by a corrupt government.¹⁶⁰ Since then, Peru has endured the turmoil of one corrupt government after another. In 2000, when a corruption scandal exposed the sitting Peruvian authoritarian ruler for human rights violations, murder, and embezzlement, there was hope for a new future. However, in March 2018, then-President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski was forced to resign amidst the release of a number of videos showing his government officials attempting to bribe members of the opposition political party to prevent a vote for

¹⁴⁸ "Introductory Guide for MESICIC Experts," OAS. http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/guide_exp_new.pdf
Accessed January 2, 2019.

¹⁴⁹ "Introductory Guide for MESICIC Experts," OAS.

¹⁵⁰ GA RES/A/70/L.1

¹⁵¹ GA RES/A/70/L.1

¹⁵² GA RES/A/70/L.1

¹⁵³ GA RES/A/70/L.1

¹⁵⁴ "2018 Development Goals," UN Stats. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2018/overview/> Accessed January 2, 2019.

¹⁵⁵ Olken and Pande, *Corruption in Developing Countries*. Accessed December 08, 2018.

¹⁵⁶ "UNCAC: linking it in," United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, https://www.unodc.org/documents/NGO/UNCAC_and_Sustainable_Development_Goals_UNDP.pdf Accessed December 08, 2018.

¹⁵⁷ "Corruption Around the World," IMF, May 1998. <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/wp9863.pdf> Accessed January 5, 2019.

¹⁵⁸ "Corruption Around the World," IMF. Accessed January 5, 2019.

¹⁵⁹ Goldenberg, Sonia. "Can Peru's Democracy Survive Corruption?" March 25, 2018.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/25/opinion/peru-democracy-corruption.html> Accessed January 5, 2019.

¹⁶⁰ Goldenberg, Sonia. "Can Peru's Democracy Survive Corruption?"

impeachment.¹⁶¹ While a long line of Peruvian presidents are fugitives or imprisoned, one aspect that has improved is the ability of the Peruvian people to detect corruption and hold their leaders accountable.

Why has eradicating corruption from the Peruvian government proved to be so difficult? Primarily, the institutions in Peru are weak.¹⁶² With a judiciary that is not strong or independent enough to enforce the laws, and a legislative branch that attuned to bribery and pay-offs, it is not surprising that the enforcement of anti-corruption initiatives has failed.¹⁶³ Additionally, the presidential elections in Peru are generally run and financed illegally and by foreign governments.¹⁶⁴ While Peruvian law permits for public funding of political campaigns, it has never actually been used.¹⁶⁵ Instead, it is funded by direct campaign contributions, a number of which are illegal in amount or origin.¹⁶⁶ The activities of politically-involved third parties are not regulated, and thus foreign governments, companies, and other external actors wield an immense amount of power over the political figures.¹⁶⁷

Further compounding the problem is the weak foundation of the elected offices. The political party structures in Peru are incredibly fragile, particularly since the collapse of the party system in the 1990s.¹⁶⁸ Ironically, the party system collapsed due to anger from the general populace with the established political parties for corruption and economic turmoil in the State.¹⁶⁹ This led to the nearly constant creation of new parties, generally centralized in urban areas unrepresentative of the population of the State.¹⁷⁰ With low barriers to entry for new parties and the continued frustration of Peruvian voters with the established parties, there is a wide variation in visions and opinions for the future of Peru and a lack of consensus strong enough to implement any lasting change.¹⁷¹

Finally, the continued deteriorating economic and social status of Peru has contributed to increased turbulence in the political system and increased corruption. The Member State's economic history is turbulent, beginning with colonial exploitation, followed by a significant number of wars and economic depressions, and culminating with unstable resources of foreign investment.¹⁷² Although the economic status of Peru appears to be improving as of 2018, with an increased rate of exports of minerals and agricultural products, the inequal dispersion of the wealth and poor infrastructure in the state's rural regions make it increasing difficult for its citizens to see any real benefit.¹⁷³

There are forces in Peru at work in attempt to make improvements and mitigate corruption. In 2017, the Congress made it illegal for companies that have acknowledged or been convicted of corruption from taking part in new contracts.¹⁷⁴ The Attorney General's office has also launched investigations into a number of companies to determine the presence of corrupt practices.¹⁷⁵ As a result of public protests to the revelation of significant corruption within the judiciary in 2018, current President Martin Vizcarra created a new official cabinet position, the Secretary of Public Integrity, to replace the High-Level Commission on Anti-Corruption and implement the National Integrity Plan and Fight Against Corruption.¹⁷⁶ This detailed plan provides significant insight into the process to

¹⁶¹ Goldenberg, Sonia. "Can Peru's Democracy Survive Corruption?"

¹⁶² Goldenberg, Sonia. "Can Peru's Democracy Survive Corruption?"

¹⁶³ Goldenberg, Sonia. "Can Peru's Democracy Survive Corruption?"

¹⁶⁴ *2014 Money, Politics, and Transparency Report*, Global Integrity. <https://data.moneyandpoliticstransparency.org/countries/PE/> Accessed January 5, 2019.

¹⁶⁵ *2014 Money, Politics, and Transparency Report*

¹⁶⁶ *2014 Money, Politics, and Transparency Report*

¹⁶⁷ *2014 Money, Politics, and Transparency Report*

¹⁶⁸ "Peru – Political Parties," Global Security. <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/peru/political-parties.htm> Accessed January 5, 2019.

¹⁶⁹ Seawright, James. *Party-System Collapse: The Roots of Crisis in Peru and Venezuela*. Stanford University Press, 2012.

¹⁷⁰ "Peru – Political Parties."

¹⁷¹ "Peru – Political Parties."

¹⁷² "Peruvian Economy," Lima Easy. <http://www.limaeasy.com/peru-info/peruvian-economy> Accessed January 5, 2019.

¹⁷³ "Peruvian Economy," Lima Easy.

¹⁷⁴ "Peru prosecutors raid offices of major builders in graft probe," Reuters, January 12, 2018.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-peru-corruption/peru-prosecutors-raid-offices-of-major-builders-in-graft-probe-idUSKBN1F12LY> Accessed January 5, 2019.

¹⁷⁵ "Peru prosecutors raid offices of major builders in graft probe."

¹⁷⁶ Glover, Peter. "Anti-Corruption Protests in Peru and the Evolving Path Forward," Corporate Compliance Trends, September 26, 2018. <http://cctrends.cipe.org/anti-corruption-protests-in-peru-and-the-evolving-path-forward/> Accessed January 5, 2019.

resolve issues that contribute to the continued systemic corruption in Peru.¹⁷⁷ However, the new Secretary was not provided with any additional resources to combat the problem, leading to increasing questions as to whether the function can actually create any real change.¹⁷⁸

Conclusion

Corruption is not a new problem for the international community, yet it is a problem that impacts nearly every aspect of life. Despite attempts to eradicate corruption, particularly within OAS Member States, the problem persists. Government after government falls subject to corruption scandals, and there seems to be no clear path forward. Corruption decreases the faith of the international community therefore limiting foreign investment, leading to a decrease in economic status and an increase in socioeconomic disparity. Limited government funds lead to a decrease in the provision of resources, and economic hardship in the state increases.

Identifying the elements of corruption within political institutions has often proven to be a challenge. Numerous organizations, resolutions, and programs have been developed to eradicate all forms of corruption, but while there may be tools to recognize the issues, it still persists today in the Americas. From an international perspective, all UN Member States have agreed to tackle corruption as outlined in Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With strong trust in democratically-elected institutions, combating organized crime, ensuring equal justice, and promoting the rule of law, Member States may find positive strides in eliminating corruption and achieving success for SDG 16. For the Americas, being identified as “developing” or “least developing” Member States could result in a more complicated path to establishing strong institutions, such as judiciary, legislative, and presidential levels.

Without strong institutions and the enforceability of law, corruption will remain a common occurrence for OAS Member States. While the OAS adopted the IACC, which assisted Member States with mechanisms to detect, investigate, combat, punish, and eliminate corruption, this issue continues as one of the most serious hurdles and threats to the Americas' democracies and its economic and social developments.¹⁷⁹ According to a report from Jorge Garcia-Gonzalez, who served as director for the Department of Legal Cooperation and Information for the OAS General Secretariat, corruption has an impact on economic growth, investments, and trade decline when corruption is high in a Member State, and his statement was also noted in the Inter-American Development Bank's (IDB) Economic and Social Progress Report on Latin America in 2000.¹⁸⁰ The same IDB report also revealed that between 85 percent and 93 percent of Latin Americans considered corruption within their Member State was getting worse instead of improving and many of them labeled corruption as the most serious problem on a national level.¹⁸¹ While there have been low levels of both satisfaction and confidence in numerous Latin American political institutions, Latin Americans still showed strong preference in democracy than other forms of government.¹⁸²

Committee Directive

It is clear that this problem is not an easy one to solve. However, the international community as a whole and the OAS specifically can do more to support the eradication efforts of Member States. Additionally, efforts to strengthen political institutions and decrease socioeconomic hardship can contribute, both directly and indirectly, to the elimination of corruption. It is the responsibility of this committee to determine a potential pathway forward. How can the OAS help? What is the best way to support those Member States that are already taking action to thwart corruption? What about those Member States who have done nothing to address the problem? Ensure that you keep in mind the varying economic and political structures throughout the OAS. Think outside of the box to determine how the OAS can best support the needs of its Member States in dealing with this complicated and intricate issue the impacts every facet of daily life for the citizens of OAS Member States. Are there examples, either in development or known successes, from your Member State that may serve as a learning example for fellow OAS members?

¹⁷⁷ Glover, Peter. “Anti-Corruption Protests in Peru and the Evolving Path Forward.”

¹⁷⁸ Glover, Peter. “Anti-Corruption Protests in Peru and the Evolving Path Forward.”

¹⁷⁹ Garcia-Gonzalez, Jorge. “The OAS and the fight against corruption in the Americas.”

¹⁸⁰ Garcia-Gonzalez, Jorge. “The OAS and the fight against corruption in the Americas.”

¹⁸¹ Garcia-Gonzalez, Jorge. “The OAS and the fight against corruption in the Americas.”

¹⁸² Garcia-Gonzalez, Jorge. “The OAS and the fight against corruption in the Americas.”

Annotated Bibliography

I. Promoting Sustainable Cities and Communities

Emerging and Sustainable Cities. Inter-American Development Bank. Accessed January 07, 2019.

<http://www.iadb.org/en/cities>

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has a technical assistance program titled "Emerging and Sustainable Cities Program (ESC)." The program provides support to national and subnational governments for environmental and climate change sustainability, urban sustainability, and fiscal sustainability and governance. There are numerous publications available for various Organization of American States (OAS) Member States in regards to this IDB program.

"How Cities in Developing Countries Are Becoming More Resilient." Smart Cities Dive. Accessed January 07, 2019.

<http://www.smartcitiesdive.com/ex/sustainablecitiescollective/how-cities-developing-countries-are-becoming-more-resilient/246296/>.

This article points out specific standards and expectations included in the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report for urban areas in developing Member States. It details the struggle between development and climate change sustainability for developing countries as a major issue. Within the OAS region, two cities in Argentina and Columbia are detailed in this article for steps taken in urban areas to protect their future and promote sustainability. This article is a good source for more recent information regarding sustainability and climate change.

Ibrahim, Seddik, Wael, and Hossam. "Towards Green Cities in Developing Countries: Egyptian New Cities as a Case Study." OUP Academic. June 15, 2017. Accessed January 07, 2019.

<http://academic.oup.com/ijlct/article/12/4/358/3868475>.

This journal details the issues with urban management and development in developing Member States. Specifically, it focuses on Egypt and its urbanization and industrialization. The environmental standards, effects, and performance by cities in Egypt are evaluated, as the journal focuses on an environmental standpoint. The journal claims that green mechanisms within urban management in Egypt help to solve their issues posed by urbanization. It also focuses on a regional mechanism called the African Green City Index.

"Smart Cities for Sustainable Development." United Nations University. Accessed January 07, 2019.

<http://unu.edu/projects/smart-cities-for-sustainable-development.html#outline>.

This site details a past project called Smart Cities for Sustainable Development. The details include statistics of urbanization and focuses on new technologies for sustainability. Specifically, Digital Cities, with digital technology integrated into infrastructure systems; Intelligent Cities, using digital city infrastructure to build physical infrastructure and integrate into urban systems; and Smart Cities, using intelligent urban systems to aid socio-economic development and improve quality of life. This site links to a full report on the analysis of this types of cities and policy recommendations.

II. Eliminating Corruption in Political Institutions

Lopez-Claros, Augusto. "Six Strategies to Fight Corruption." Jobs and Development. May 14, 2014. Accessed January 07, 2019.

<http://blogs.worldbank.org/futuredevelopment/futuredevelopment/six-strategies-fight-corruption>.

The World Bank detailed issues created by corruptions and strategies to use against corruption. Paying civil servants well, creating transparency, and openness in government spending, cutting red tape, replacing regressive and distorting subsidies with targeted cash transfers, establishing international conventions, and deploying smart technology are the suggestions focused on in this article. These strategies are aimed to work in any number of Member States facing corruption, and specifically within the OAS region, Chile is mentioned as a model.

"Using Institutional Multiplicity to Address Corruption as a Collective Action Problem: Lessons from the Brazilian Case." NeuroImage. July 28, 2016. Accessed January 07, 2019.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1062976916300564>.

This paper from The Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance claimed that corruption is a collective action problem and attempts to address the gap between this systemic problem and public policy reforms. The solution of institutional multiplicity would allow for creation of new institutions without disturbing the current structure of a Member State. Additionally, the accountability system in Brazil, born out of recent anti-corruption agendas, is studied as a possible successful example for institutional multiplicity.

Mirzayev, Elvin. "The Economic and Social Effects of Corruption." Investopedia. November 26, 2018. Accessed January 07, 2019.

<https://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/012215/how-corruption-affects-emerging-economies.asp>.

An article from Investopedia that studied the effect of corruption on emerging economies, or in other words, "developing" Member States. The author identified areas with high and low corruption, and their relevant economic structures. This article also detailed the effects seen, such as inefficiently allocated resources, uneven distribution of wealth, shadow economies, and the effects on healthcare and education. A useful map is included comparing Member States' positions in corruption.

"The Politics of Policies: Economic and Social Progress in Latin America: 2006 Report," The Inter-American Development Bank. January 2006. <http://publications.iadb.org/en/publication/16950/politics-policies-economic-and-social-progress-latin-america-2006-report> Accessed January 07, 2019.

With a series of authors for the IDB, this report features various aspects of corruption across Latin America. The main purpose of the report was the process of adopting and implementing public policy in Latin American countries but instances of corruption and how it may play and has played a role in political institutions were often noted. From presidential, cabinet, legislative, and judicial levels, the report mentions the struggles of policymaking, why there has been struggles with success, and how even the slight possibility of corruption may lurk through institutions and people.